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Remarks

The Applicant acknowledges the indication that claims 26, 27, and 44-49 are allowed. The Applicant also acknowledges the indication that claims 36, 40, 41, and 43 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response to this indication, the Applicant has amended claim 36 to be in independent form and has amended claim 39 to include the limitation of claim 40. In view of these amendments, the Applicant submits claims 36, 39, and their dependent claims are in condition for allowance.

Independent claims 23, 33, and 69 remain pending in the application. Claim 70 has been canceled. Claim 69 has been rejected as being anticipated by Donaldson '651. The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. Claim 69 requires the outer muntin grid element to be fabricated from a non-metallic foam material. Claim 69 also requires the tube to be unitary. The claim has been amended to require the sidewall to be continuous. The element cited in the office action as being the Donaldson outer muntin grid element is a roll formed metal that does not form a unitary tube because its edges abut at the slit identified in the office action. Donaldson thus does not disclose or suggest claim 69.

Independent claims 23, 33, and 69 stand rejected as being obvious in view of the combination of Martin and Smith. The Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections. Martin discloses a muntin bar grid having muntin bars held together with pins. The muntin bar grid thus does not have inner and outer muntin grid elements as required by each of the claims. In order to distinguish the elements recited in these claims from the Martin disclosure, the Applicant has amended claims 23, 33, and 69 to recite that the inner muntin grid elements are disposed in a grid arrangement. The Martin connector pins are not disposed in the recited grid arrangements. Further, the Applicant submits the outer muntin bar elements of Martin are not collapsible and reopenable as recited in claims 23 and 33. Although the Martin elements are described as being flexible, the Martin elements are formed from a styrene plastic. The styrene plastic muntin bars of

Martin are not collapsible in the manner that the term collapsible is used in the present application. The Applicant respectfully directs the Examiner's attention to Applicant's Fig. 34 where a collapsible outer muntin grid element is disclosed in the collapsed form.

The collapsibility of the outer muntin grid element allows the outer muntin grid element to be collapsed and stored and shipped and then reopened when the manufacturer uses the outer muntin grid element. The collapsibility of the outer muntin grid element also allows the outer muntin grid element to collapse and reopen when the glass sheets of a window press against the outer muntin grid element. The glass sheets may press against the outer muntin grid elements during wind, pressure, and temperature changes. The Martin reference fails to disclose, teach, or suggest the flexible, collapsible outer muntin grid element recited in independent claims 23 and 33.

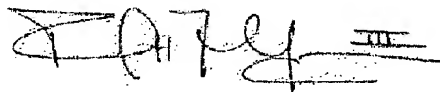
Independent claims 23 and 33 are thus patentable over the Martin-Smith combination.

The Applicant has added new claims 71-75 and respectfully requests the claims to be examined.

In view of the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the claims and most earnestly solicits the issuance of a formal notice of allowance for the claims. If any issues remain after this amendment, the undersigned attorney would welcome a telephone call.

Respectfully submitted,

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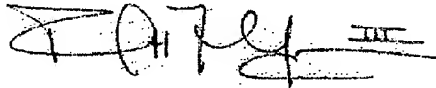
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I hereby certify that this correspondence (Amendment H in application serial no. 09/775,074 filed February 1, 2001) is being submitted via facsimile on this 7th day of February, 2007.



Fred H. Zollinger III